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A Lenten Meditation from Gloria Liggins

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. For years we have talked about gun violence. So far this year, we have had 102 mass shootings. Suicide and homicide are the second and third leading causes of death among our youth, with 93% of those homicides resulting from gun violence. Children between the ages of 0-11 have had 40 deaths and 105 injuries. Children between the ages of 12-17 have had 262 deaths and 633 injured. These numbers cause my heart to bleed. Every day there is a news report of gun violence or attempted gun violence. Our children are bringing guns to school at the early age of 6 with the intent to kill.

Deuteronomy 11:19-21 You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

Our children deserve a chance to live a full life. We must find a way to combat this trend. Thank God Rev. Woods and the SECUCC directors are concerned about this problem with our children. The question is where we start. Dr. King, whom I consider the leader of non-violence, gave us six steps toward overcoming violence that I feel will lead us in the right direction. They are:

1. Gather information: learn as much as you can about the problems around you and talk to those directly impacted.
2. Educate others: it is your duty to help those around you better understand the problems in society.
3. Remain committed: knowing you will face obstacles and blowback,

work to inspire others.

4. Peacefully negotiate talk to both sides, use humor, grace, and intelligence to foster solutions between the oppressed and the oppressors.
5. Take action peacefully: rely on peaceful demonstrations, letter-writing, and civil disobedience.
6. Reconcile: keep all actions peaceful and constructive.

Join us as we work toward a solution. Talk to your children about how this is affecting them. Tell us what they think. Please be open to the voice of children. Many times, we try to solve their problems without finding out what their problems are. Together we can do this. God bless each of you!

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